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MAP THE GAP
October 28 - November 29, 1997
Opening Reception : October 28, 6-8 PM

The Storefront For Art and Architecture presents **Map the Gap**, a 3-D documentary organized by the **äda 'web** team, in collaboration with Jenny Holzer, Toland Grinnell, Julia Scher, Vivian Selbo, Lawrence Weiner, Matthew Ritchie, Doug Aitken, and Muntadas. The exhibition will trace the collaborative process between äda 'web and these artists, which has led to the production of medium specific projects presented on the äda 'web site.

Map the Gap presents selected documents, including sketches, magazine cutouts, story-boards, maquettes, sound bytes and drawings, all of which reflect the networked structure of the internet and the subsequent production strategy this medium requires. The installation intends to provide a context for the viewing of the on-line projects that will also be presented in the gallery.

Founded in late 1994, äda 'web is a web production studio and site whose goal is to offer artists a platform for the investigation of the web as a medium. Acting as a "digital foundry", the studio offers a dialogical interface and provides design and technological expertise to enable selected artists to participate in the definition of the medium.

Following are a list of projects that will be on exhibition:

Jenny Holzer, Please Change Belliefs (April 1995) is the first project produced by äda 'web. Using the hyperlink structure of the web, Jenny Holzer "anchored" her project within the larger realm of the network, so as to give anonymous access to a selection of her "Truisms" and other series of work. Participants are then invited to adapt a selection of those "Truisms", in a way that recalls the graffiti covering Holzer's street posters. The visitor may also vote on the same series of "Truisms", as a hint of the notion of direct democracy heralded by new media.

Ben Kinmont , We Both Belong (August 1995)   extends to the network his ongoing investigation of exchanges in the public space, as part of what he refers to as The Third Sculpture. Concomitant to the development of a full fledged project using the web as an interface of exchange between him and the participants, Ben Kinmont reflects on ways to use the medium to document previous actions he had worked on.

Toland Grinnell, Captain's Lair (September 1995) explores the idea of the virtual visit to an environment conceived specifically for the web. This cinematic project takes its cue from special effects film techniques and investigates hypermedia's potential to build non-linear narratives.

Julia Scher, Securityland (April 1995- April 1997) This was the first iterative project äda 'web produced. The project was announced with a trailer in the early spring of 1995. This was the first part of the ongoing project which was released in the Fall of the same year. Securityland reflects on virtual reality and immersive environments, simultaneously exploring issues of social conditioning raised by surveillance in the age of global networks as well as by the prevalence of entertainment as the ultimate form of mass culture (Securityland derives from Disneyland). The project also posits the web as a new frontier, and uses architectural and geographical metaphors. The latest addition (Spring 1997), Wonderland, evokes the "White House for Kids" web site: Wonderland is the children's version of Securityland.

Matthew Ritchie,The Hard Way (ongoing since September 1996) , illustrates the notion of continuum in the development of a responsive dialogue with the medium. As the artist works with the web and furthers his understanding of this medium, he proceeds with an investigation that exposes the project as an ongoing process which questions the notion of discrete work embedded in other media. Inserting his work outside of the art world's boundaries enables the artist to challenge the "information revolution" with a playful yet critical approach to the "information superhighway".

Lawrence Weiner, Homeport (September 1996), responds to what he considers the medium's primary function, communication. Taking his cue from radio, specifically ship to shore radio, the artist imagines distanced and time delayed dialogues, unencumbered by context. Homeport is a graphic chat environment which undermines the convention of such interfaces on the internet: most of those environments intend to create an illusion of real space, whereas Homeport is deliberately two-dimensional and minimal in its design. The project also features two robots, engaged in a dialogue that somehow points to the lack of focus in the ongoing discussions that usually occur in on-line chat.

Vivian Selbo, Vertical Blanking Interval (December 1996), reflects on the insertion of the internet via the "blind spot" of the television signal. Vertical Blanking Interval presents the viewer with the difference between "push" media (where the viewer does not control the flow of information) and "pull" technology (where the viewer selects when and in what way the content is accessed). The tension between "push" and "pull" are seeded with a seductive undertone, emphasizing how different media create need and demand.

Doug Aitken, Loaded 5x , exemplifies non-linear narrative using five characters from his photo essay who are presented in a fictional thread. Through multiple entry points and possible progressions in the story, a participant can switch paths to create a new reading upon each visit of the site.

Muntadas, On Translation, constructs into the web his ongoing translation of a sentence, through a cycle of 23 languages. As the process continues, the meaning of the original sentence gradually evolves, revealing the conceptual differences between cultures. In its "Backstage" dimension, On Translation: The Internet Project also presents traces of the process, as well as alternate translations posted by participants, notes, and links to related sites of interests.

For further information please contact Paola Morrongiello at 212 431 5795.

Mind the Gap (working title)

Exhibition concept:
For the past three years. ada 'web has been working with artists on the investigation of the internet as a new means of dissemination of their ideas, exploring the network and the hypermedia structure brought by the web with their various sensitivities and interests. The process of collaboration we have gone through is at the source of the exhibition at the Storefront for Art and Architecture. Indeed, as much as the web may be a transparent medium, there are parts of the process that remain invisible and these are very much part of what one could call the gap between real space and virtual space. Vivian Selbo once called that gap the space between the keyboard and the chair. That would unmistakably be the human space, the unfinished thoughts and questions, the ongoing discussions and debates that go on between the artists, the producers, and the curators.

Rather than approaching this exhibition as the display of an archive, the idea is more to reveal the traces of those dialogues, steps, unfinished thoughts this medium calls for in order to present the constitutive elements that informed the "finished product" to the viewers. There is not really a finished product, so to speak. Rather, there are steps of development that are possible to present to the internet "visitor", which get to be implemented with selected parts of an ongoing thought process step by step, as soon as they have formalized to a point that makes it possible for a public to engage with.

The web is another form of architecture. Or maybe the web is an interesting model to reflect upon what architecture is. It could also be that the web is best understood through the use of the architectural paradigm. The possibility to investigate these issues in a space that blends the concept of art and architecture seems the most natural and compelling "real space" environment to display the fruit of those investigations.

The exhibition will consists of those elements which constitute the trace of the gap drawings, sketches and maps, sounds bytes and writings. These will be juxtaposed to the actual projects, displayed on a projection screen. Participating artists will collaborate with the ada web team just as they have for the making of the projects. These artists will be the ones who express interest in investigating that gap. So far they include Jenny Holzer, Toland Grinnell, Ben Kinmont, Julia Scher, Lawrence Weiner, Vivian Selbo, Matthew Ritchie and Doug Aitken.

As with the development of web projects, the exhibition may also function in layers. That could be the occasion of a presentation which evolves over the course of the duration of the show.

äda 'web

32 w 22 ny ny 10010

t: :212.620.7288 f: :212.620.6224

http://adaweb.com